

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph at page 10 beginning at line 4, as follows:

The facing layer 12 is preferably secured to the proximal surface *p* of the absorbent core 14. The facing layer 12 includes a plurality of apertures 34 that are preformed in a straight manner through the thickness of the facing layer and in a pattern prior to securing the facing layer 12 to the absorbent core 14 (as depicted by at least the perforating elements 44 in the perforation device 42 of FIGS. 19 and 20). As shown schematically in FIGS. 2 and 4, the plurality of apertures 34 may be arranged in a predetermined, grid-like pattern (as likewise shown in at least FIGS. 10, 12, 14 and 15). The plurality of apertures 34 may be configured to correspond to regions near or at the plurality of receptacles 18 of the absorbent core 14 so as to transport exudate from a wound site to the absorbent core 14. The facing layer 12 is preferably secured only to the proximal surface *p* of the absorbent core 14 and preferably does not coat the walls of the pores or holes of the absorbent core 14 defined near the proximal surface *p* thereof. It will be understood, however, that portions of the facing layer may fill irregularities disposed along the proximal surface of the absorbent core or pores of the absorbent core so as to improve the security of the facing layer to the absorbent core.